

Community Comments

Newsletter

September, 1973

XX 11 #2

"From the days of the earliest treaties, Indians were shocked at the white man's attitude toward land. The tribal elders laughed contemptuously at the idea that a man could sell land. 'Why not sell the air we breathe, the water we drink, the animals we hunt?' some replied. It was ludicrous to Indians that people would consider land as a commodity that could be owned by one man. The land supports all life. It is given to all people." (Freedom With Reservation)

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"One does not sell the earth upon which the people live."

- Tashunka Witko (Crazy Horse)

Community Service Land Trust

Community Service has long been working on the concept of land trust as contrasted with state, individual or cooperative ownership of land. Gris proposed and had adopted a land trust platform for the Socialist Party in 1938. Individual ownership tends to mean speculative profiteering, and cooperative ownership can be the self-interest of a group. The land trust we have been working to achieve gives title to tracts to a trusteeship committed to the long term interests of society and nature as an enduring heritage, and makes land available in leaseholds to individuals, groups and communities for uses consistent with the purposes of the trust.

The terms of trusts and leaseholds can vary greatly. As legal form and responsible social function, the land trust is coming of age in America as it has in Israel, and it should be used where appropriate and needed as a tool to bring to our society a sense of land as a common heritage and responsibility.

One of our objectives for the Community Service Land Trust was that it would not be identified with any one project. Community Service, Inc. is in the process of acquiring the 40 acres on which the Vale Community is located and already has 2 acres of field within the Village of Yellow Springs, which we plan to make available as garden space for families in the town. We are working with an America Indian group at finding land in the East for resettlement where they can feel secure in their land use, possibly in conjunction with other intentional communities. A group in southern Ohio has expressed interest in placing their land in trust with C.S.

Community Service has budgeted \$30,000 for land purchase where we see the need to be particularly great. We want to hear from people with particular land need where they might want land trust help. People interested in a trust arrangement for their land are welcome to ask for more information. We have collected a variety of the agreements used by different land trusts and have resources on theory and history of community land trusts. Contributions are welcome.

"When you come into this world you are born with a talent.
I want to tell you about my talent.
It's being what I am, an Indian...

I'm proud to be an Indian girl.
I'm not like the other little Indian
girls who want to be someone else."
Elana Rayna, Age 9, Hopi/Teeva



THE MENOMINEE STRUGGLE TO SAVE THEIR LAND AND PEOPLE!

4 book review

The book, Freedom With Reservation, is a collaborative effort by the Menominee Indians of Wisconsin, to make people aware of the tremendous struggles they have had and are still having to maintain their Indian life. The Menominee are Wisconsin's oldest continuously resident people, dating back some 5,000 years or more. Like other American Indians, the Menominee were forced to give up most of their homeland. Then in a number of treaties in the 1800's the Menominee's reservation was reduced from 9,500,000 acres to 235,000 acres.

Through out their forced reservation existence, the Menominee

were able to maintain their own council and identity, and by 1954 seemed much more fortunate than other tribes. However, in 1954 the federal government struck at the fundamental basis of Menominee identity, social cohesiveness, and relative prosperity by passing the Menominee Termination Act which took away the Menominee Indian's status as a federally protected native tribe. "The termination legislation was the product of Senators and Congressmen far removed in distance and understanding from the actual problems facing the Menominee people. They asked for little advice or participation of the Indian's involved in termination", and made no effort to see that even a small percentage of the 3,270 Menominee people understood termination, but rather made them feel as if there was no other choice.

The Menominee were never rich, and in the 7 years from 1954 to 1961 when termination took effect, their financial assets of \$10,000,000 which were held by the federal government began to vanish rapidly as individual Indians were paid past dividends, and as the government insisted that they pay for the costs of termination themselves. "The lumbering operation (which had been a major source of employment) began to teeter on insolvency, the hospital was closed, the utility companies were sold, and hundreds of Menominee were forced to leave their homes to find employment, many only to trade rural poverty for urban slums, and by 1960 the Tribe was operating at a \$230,000 annual deficit."

Termination has struck at a number of deep-seated aspects of the Menominee's identity. One was in forcing them to treat the earth as a possession to be sold and used for "profit". "To the Menominee, land is the center of their existence. The nature of the land determines how they live." Traditionally the Indians' attitude has been that "the earth is our mother. We do not kill our mother... the frog does not drink up the pond in which it lives."

These values and much more of the Menominee's culture have been treated as if they were worthless compared to white culture. For the Menominee children it has been particularly hard to keep their identity. They no longer have any tribal status and are confronted with incredible prejudice at school.

This fight for their lives has been extremely difficult for the Menominee. During the 1960's their jobs were jeopardized many times when they spoke up against the system that was oppressing them. Finally in 1970 "the organization and continued communication among Tribal members, whether in the county, or Milwaukee, or Chicago, (culminated in) a grass roots organization entitled Determination of Rights and Unity for Menominee Shareholders (DRUMS). "Achieving the reversal of Menominee termination is the primary goal of DRUMS," and they seem to be succeeding. DRUMS has introduced a bill before Congress which will "restore the Government's status as trustee of the Menominee land and (will) restore to the Menominee the Federal Services which were taken from (them)."

These gains have not been made without costs of time and money, and as Freedom With Reservation points out "Menominee volunteered their services because funds were not available," many Menominees have over extended and over worked themselves for their cause.

Freedom with Reservation disturbed and moved me as it set forth the struggles the Menominee have had to survive. As Congressman Obey of Wasau, Wisconsin said, "self-determination is a far cry from termination." Hopefully Freedom With Reservation will help us all to realize the beauty in all peoples everywhere.

Freedom With Reservation can be purchased from Community Service for \$2.50 or from Menominee, P.O. Box 1344, Madison, Wisconsin, 53701.

POSTSCRIPT. . .

We recently found out from an Indian friend that the termination reversal DRUMS was seeking was defeated in the Supreme Court and that all their timber has been stripped to pay the high property taxes. Most of their land has been sold and most of the Menominee have been forced to sell their land and have moved onto a reservation with another tribe. It is hard to see any good in this destruction of their reservation other than it may serve as a warning to other tribes. We feel that it certainly points to the need for land trusts not under the control of the Federal government or the Bureau of Indian Affairs.



THE HOME HEALTH HANDBOOK

"Slowly we are learning not to be dominated by our technology. We are learning once again to fix our own cars, grow our own food, build our own houses, and to create our own culture. Part of the revolution--the part that is perhaps the slowest in coming--is learning to take care of our own bodies."*

The Home Health Handbook is particularly designed for those living in rural communes but is useful for anyone interested in taking more responsibility for his or her own health. It is an easily readable book which includes information on first aid and farm nutrition and health, communal diseases, and herbal medicine. There is a large section on women's health which discusses pregnancy and home childbirth. We see this book as part of the movement to demystify medicine and it has been one of the starting points for an investigation into changes in health care which will be the topic of one of our next Community Comments. *From The Home Health Handbook, the Stephen Greene Press, 1972, available through Community Service, \$3.95.

adapted from cover of HHH

NEWS FROM ARTHUR MORGAN. . .
his busier-than-usual week of June 8-16, 1973

On June 8, 1973, Arthur Morgan received the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters from Ohio State University. On this happy occasion his granddaughter Faith Morgan accompanied him. He was honored by a dinner with old friends and associates and by breakfast with the President of OSU. Coming home to Yellow Springs the same day, Arthur Morgan at once hurried off to Richmond, Indiana, with his old friend Sidney Hutton, whose grandson was graduating from Earlham College the next day. Back from Earlham he then went off early on June 11 with the Ensigns to Knoxville, Tennessee, where he spent the rest of the week of a fact-finding mission at the Tennessee Valley Authority. This was in connection with his story of his years as Chairman of the TVA (1933-38) which is to be published this fall by the American Humanist Association.

In Knoxville, we found all the staff of the TVA friendly and genuinely dedicated to their jobs. Arthur Morgan told of the different aspects of his hopes for the TVA forty years ago, and how they had been scorned or abruptly terminated. Each time the reply was, "Dr. Morgan, this is just what we have been doing." Staff members gave up hours of their time to talk to him, and so we learned of TVA's special community outreach; of how they are carrying health services into counties which never before had any medical care; how they are trying to combat the effects of strip-mining; of the emphasis on conservation around the reservoirs, and on all types of outdoor recreation. On the last morning, we were driven by the head of the Forest Genetics Department, Dr. Kingsley Taft, in among the forests of tree propagation, which had been one of Arthur Morgan's special interests. then thwarted by other directors. We came away from Knoxville impressed by the TVA's comprehensive planning, so that they may truly be said to be carrying out President Roosevelt's wish for the Tennessee Valley: "It gives life to all forms of human concerns."

Back in Yellow Springs again for his 95th birthday celebration on June 17th, Dr. Morgan attended a reception to which over 200 friends and relatives came bringing greetings and good wishes. And then on Monday, of course, there was his office work piled up and waiting for him as usual!

GROUPS AND THINGS

Community Service Conference on Community Economy

Forty to fifty people met over the August 3-5 weekend for our annual conference in the Community Center in Yellow Springs. We gathered for discussions on health care and insurance, communities of work (Ithaca Project), land trusts (Peacemakers), goods and services exchange, currency reform, and economic lifestyle. Participants were housed in groups in several Yellow Springs homes.



Much attention centered on an experimental demurrage currency we called "ducats" which were issued at the conference and could be spent there or at a number of Yellow Springs stores. Each ducat, starting at a dollar value, lost 1¢ in value every half day for the rest of the week. We had fun and also illustrated how money can be maintained in circulation at a velocity determined, in part, by the agreed rate of value loss (demurrage).

Much of the experience of a conference is the opportunity for informal contacts. One of the most exciting encounters this time was between folks who want to work on making land available to those Indian groups who remain in the eastern United States. In evaluating the conference, participants decided that next year we should arrange for a place where we can meet and eat and sleep together. Hope to see you next year.

COMMUNITY ECONOMY**LAND REFORM**
BUSINESS REFORM, Two Sessions
This Fall!

Community Service is planning two work sessions for 12-24 people on Community Economy this fall. The weekend of Oct. 19-20 will be devoted to problems of business organization and ownership. Nov. 9-11 will be centered around land reform.

We are asking you to suggest people whose on-going work might be helped by such working sessions. We have in mind a wide range of people who could benefit from such study and sharing -- middle class, commune, urban, small community, white, black, and Indian. Participation will be by invitation. To be worthwhile, each session will require some preparation by all participants.

Write us if you have any suggestions, or if interested-soon!



Regional Information Centers

There is a great need for places that people concerned for a new social order and seeking alternative lifestyles can turn to. Draft counseling and vocations for social change centers have provided touching points for such seekers. We need more local or regional centers for information, counseling, support and inspiration. Here are a few address of centers that seem to provide these community services.

Institute Mountain West, 2096 Emerson, Denver, CO. 80205

New Community Projects, 32 Rutland St., Boston, Mass.

Twin Oaks Community, Box 169, Rt 4 Louisa, VA 23093

North American Student Co-operatives Organization, 2456 SAB,
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Ithaca Project, 310 4th St, Ithaca, N.Y. 14850

New York Switchboard, W 4th jSt, New York, NY

OPEN, 608 19th Ave. East, Seattle, Wa 98112

Highlander, Box 245A, RFD #3, New Market, Tennessee 37820

September 22-25, Seminar on 17 Major Problems of Living, at Heathcote School of Living, Freeland, Md.

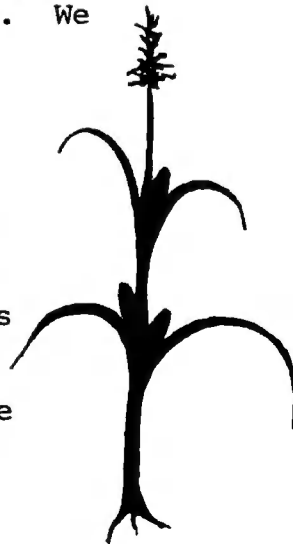
One of our joys is watching the Shanti Farms people establish themselves in St. Paris, Ohio. They operate a full scale biodynamic truck farm and for ten months of the year publish the New Schools Exchange Newsletter (NSEN) with articles and notes on new schools and ideas in education. NSEN has been coming out for over five years now, depending upon subscriptions and added donations. After moving from California to Ohio in early 1973 NSE has become \$2,000 in debt. Organizations of their quality are rare. They need your support. Subscribe at \$10 a year, New Schools Exchange, Box 820, St. Paris, Ohio 43072.

The Meaning of Membership

We are aiming to help bring about a society in which there is no occasion for war or social injustice. We invite individuals and groups who share Community Service's purposes to become members. Membership is conceived as mutual aid and concern for furthering these common purposes. Community Service and members help each other in their mutual endeavors.

We have two forms of membership in Community Service, Inc. Supporting members are those who offer spiritual and financial support. Voting members are the same, with the understanding that they also feel close enough that they will attend membership meetings and participate in selecting trustees, auditing books, modifying by-laws if need be, and, above all, helping the board and staff formulate policy and shape directions. Voting members are taken into membership by the members at a membership meeting. The basic individual membership fee is \$10 annually and the basic group fee is \$15. \$3.50 of the membership fee is used for your subscription to Community Comments Newsletter. Tax deductible contributions of \$25, \$50, \$100, and \$1000, are necessary and appreciated. We look forward to your continued participation.

"We must give due respect and loyalty to the individual, the family, the community and the nation; but we must recognize that the well-being of all of these depends upon their being linked in love with past, present, and future, with the society of man, beast, and nature, with supreme loyalty to the totality of enduring life and value in whom 'we live and move and have our being.'" --Arthur Morgan, from his new book to be published soon.



WHO OWNS THE EARTH?

A number of the articles in this issue are covering a concern that we feel is very basic to all of our lives, which is "Who Owns The Earth?"

Traditionally the American Indian has felt that land belonged to all of Creation and should be respected. Our efforts at developing a land trust have the same aim in mind, to promote trust and sharing rather than profit and exploitation.

We hope you will find it interesting.

The Staff,

Faith Morgan

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Gris Morgan

Don Holister



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You are invited:
Our next annual membership
meeting is Sat. Oct. 6th,
1973 at Rockford Chapel,
President St. in Yellow
Springs at 10:00 AM.